



Task Force Falcon

# Falcon Flier

Volume 4, Issue 3

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January 15, 2001



The 155mm gun of a M-109A6 Paladin from 1st Plt., Btry. C, 4th Bn., 27th FA Rgmt., fires an illumination round as part of a joint operation Jan. 2.

## Fire in the sky lights KFOR checkpoints

**Story and photo by  
Sgt. Thorin Sprandel  
Camp Monteith PAO**

Thunderous 155mm guns interrupted the night sky and rained down illumination rounds miles away during a live fire Jan. 2. The mission was a display of Kosovo Forces firepower and cooperation between U.S. and Russian soldiers.

Outside Gjilan/Gnjilane, cannon crews from 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, Battery C, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment, Baumholder, Germany, fired the M-109A6 Paladin's 155mm guns. Each one of about 20 rounds exploded out of the barrel with a yellow ball of fire and a concussion that shook the ground.

The rounds illuminated the sky above U.S. and Russian soldiers working together at Observation Post Gunner and

Checkpoint 75. The operation took place after a week of reported fighting between Serb and Albanian forces just east of the checkpoint in the Ground Safety Zone. In a separate incident, suspected UCPMB forces engaged a joint U.S. and Russian patrol Dec. 17.

It took more than 60 seconds for the illumination rounds to reach their target and light up the sky about 10 kilometers downrange, said Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Lawrence Maynard, platoon sergeant.

Each of the rounds, which were continuously fired, was propelled by about 40 pounds of gun powder, he said.

Four-man Paladin crews worked together to harness the power of the machine and direct it as needed. The Paladin chief uses the Automatic Fire Control System to command the gun,

*See Illumination Page 5...*

## Life at Eagle's Nest

*How soldiers live on point in Kosovo*

**Story by Staff Sgt. Cassandra Shafer  
Camp Monteith PAO**

Perched high atop a mountain in Multinational Brigade (East)'s northern most area, is Kosovo Force's patrol base Tango 16, more commonly called the Eagle's Nest.

From a bird's-eye view, the soldiers of Company C, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 35<sup>th</sup> Armor Regiment overlook this ethnically mixed village, helping the residents to resume some sort of normal lives.

"Soldiers conduct daily mounted and dismounted patrols in Novo Brdo and use Eagle's Nest as their communications platform," said Capt. Bruce Terry, Co. C commander. "They help to maintain security and stability for the village."

Novo Brdo and its surrounding area support two major businesses, a textile factory and rock quarry, both of which employ Kosovar Albanians, Serbs, and Romas.

K-Albanians and K-Serbs also work side by side at the post office, ensuring that all ethnicities get their mail. These businesses help provide an economic infrastructure for the communities, and with their employment of the three groups, show that some Kosovars are trying to heal what has happened in the past.

But observing the area and providing security for the locals isn't the only mission these soldiers perform.

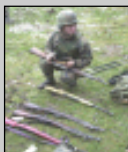
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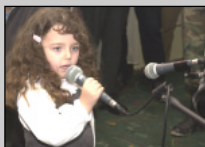
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**Read the Falcon Flier online at**  
[www.tffalcon.hqusareur.army.mil](http://www.tffalcon.hqusareur.army.mil)



## ESSAY CONTEST

Camp Bondsteel's Equal Opportunity Office is celebrating Martin Luther King day with an essay contest. Anyone is welcome to enter.

Essays must be two pages typed and double spaced on the focus of the dream today. The top six essays will receive \$50 gift certificates from AAFES. Sgt. 1st Class Bruce Challenger, the Task Force Falcon 2B EO Advisor, will be judging the contest, deadline for entry is Jan. 20.

For more information concerning this contest or if you have any EO based questions call 781-5002 or visit him on Camp Bondsteel in building 1340, room D4N.

**or email him at**

**[brucechallender@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil](mailto:brucechallender@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil)**

## WANTED

The Falcon Flier wants your stories -- award ceremonies, events, activities, or human interest news. All units from Camps Bondsteel, Able Sentry and Monteith are invited to submit information for publication. While we may not be able to run every story because of space limitations, we would like to hear from you.

Please feel free to contact the Task Force Falcon Public Affairs Office with your ideas, news and comments at:

(DSN) 781-5200

or e-mail us at [falconci@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil](mailto:falconci@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil).

## Falcon Flier

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Lt. Col. Gary Morsch, family practitioner, 313th Hospital Unit Surgical, describes what the monument for the late Merita Shabiju will look like to the family and surrounding soldiers.

# Soldiers help family of murder victim

*Story and photo by Pfc. Duane Brown  
Camp Bondsteel PAO*

One year after the brutal rape and murder of 11-year-old Merita Shabiju, Task Force MedFalcon soldiers are teaming up with international relief organizations to bring closure to the terrible incident.

Lt. Col. Gary Morsch, family practitioner, Task Force MedFalcon and founder of the Heart to Heart Organization put together the Merita Shabiju Headstone Project involving Task Force Falcon soldiers and anyone wishing to get involved in creating a new memorial for Merita.

"I visited the family and discovered that the 11-year-old girl was buried in a grave marked by two wooden posts and a cup used to bathe her prior to burial, a Muslim tradition," said Morsch. "It was then I decided to create the Merita Shabiju Headstone Project to place a monument at the gravesite."

Civil Affairs approached Morsch and asked if there was anything that the Heart to Heart Organization could do to aid the Shabiju family, said Lt. Col. Allison P. Clark III, deputy commander, TFMedFalcon and project treasurer. The commander went to Task Force Med Falcon with the suggestion and we got involved.

"What we are trying to do is give the family a little help by building a wonderful memorial that Merita deserves," said Morsch. "I hope this will bring a sense of closure to the family, the Army and the community."

Col. Herman M. Blanton, commander of TFMedFalcon, contacted Task Force Falcon commander Brig. Gen. Kenneth J. Quinlan about the project and he was very enthusiastic, Clark said. The commander wanted to open it to the entire task force.

Staff judge advocate reviewed papers concerning the project to ensure no violations of any joint ethic regulations or conflict of interest between the Army versus private activities, Clark said.

There is no use of government funds for this project, according to Clark. This is essentially a private activity.

The whole project thrives on private contributions and resources

with the support and endorsement of Quinlan, Clark said.

All money received is deposited in a bank in Gijilan/Gnjilane, he added.

"The price of the headstone is 4000 DM," Clark said. "So far, 560 DM has been put down on the monument deposit. Since the paying the deposit, I have received an additional \$100."

The memorial is something the Shabiju family could never afford on their own. The primary source of income for the family comes from firewood, harvesting honey and mushroom farming.

The Shabiju family lives in a two-bedroom house in the mountains outside of Viti/Vitina.

The father aspires to one day move his family to the village of Viti/Vitina. Currently, the Shabiju children are unable to attend school because they live so far away from the village.

Although it has been one year since the death of Merita, her parents keep her memory alive.

"Merita liked her favorite red jacket, sweaters with plenty of colors, jeans, small chocolate bars and nuts," Mrs. Shabiju said. "We still have a piece of the nut she was eating the day she left us."

Merita's blue book bag still hangs by a nail in the corner of the family's living room. No one has touched it since the last time she hung it there. The Shabiju family, like the Army is ready to move past this incident though.

"We are thankful for the visit. Every time soldiers visit, it is more like a family visit and not a visit by strangers," Mr. Shabiju said.

"My daughter was killed by one individual soldier, not the entire Army," Mr. Shabiju said.

Staff Sgt. Frank Ronghi pleaded guilty to the crime of premeditated murder, forcible sodomy and indecent acts with a child.

Ronghi is now serving a life-sentence at the U.S. Army Disciplinary Barracks in Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas.

Donations for the monument can be sent or given to Lt. Col. Gary Morsch, TFF Chaplin Leslie Mitkos and Lt. Col. Allison Clark.  
Call Morsch at 781-3160 for more information.

# TFF CSM takes a moment to thank you

Greetings to all of you in Falcon Land! I hope you all had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I just wanted to let you all know that I am overly pleased with everybody's performance and the way you are conducting your daily business. There is always room for improvement through, so continue to work on standards and discipline. Don't take any short cuts with the weapons clearing procedures, and continue to uphold the high standards you have all set in the Force Protection and safety arenas. I look forward to working with all of you in continuing to advance the ball in making Kosovo a better and safer environment.

## **Marking the legacy of a man**

The nation will pause on Jan. 15 to celebrate a 20th Century prophet (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.). As soldiers serving our country we are continually fighting for Dr. King's dream of freedom, justice and equality for all. Our challenge today is to see that his spirit never dies - to captivate people influencing lives as we develop our own posture here in Kosovo and in our own lives.

Dr. King captured a spirit. He had a vision, a unique sense of profound judgment



Command Sgt. Maj. Sherman L. Fuller

and dedication to making a difference or changing the views of the nation and improving the lives of a disenfranchised people. One person did make a difference, but it will take a nation to change the racism deeply rooted

in so many hearts. In today's Army we give soldiers the power to make a difference, to treat everyone with dignity and respect and protect their natural born rights.

We are doing that here every day in Kosovo. Every time you boost the spirits of a child, drive through a village that once was riddled with ethnic violence, you are promoting liberty and freedom. You embody that dream. We have taken Dr. King's dream and helped bring it to life here in Kosovo.

One person can make a difference, one small step at a time. It's not an easy or quick process, it's one that may take generations to change completely. But you are out there giving people a chance to fulfill that dream.

Freedom and equality are precious items. They must be handled with care and they must be offered to all. Although our mission in here is to provide that dream for the people of Kosovo, it is taken for granted. We cannot take it for granted. We see it how fragile that dream is every day. It's something we cannot forget.

Thanks to everyone who helps to make Dr. King's dream a reality.

## Tax Center opening on Camp Bondsteel

Most service members should be receiving W-2's soon and will want to file their taxes to get refunds.

The Task Force Falcon Tax Assistance Center will open on Monday, February 5 to provide basic assistance in preparing taxes. It is located in Building 1340A, Room A5N, on the front of Admin Alley. Limited assistance will also be provided through the JAG offices at Camp Monteith and Camp Able Sentry based on personnel available. Hours and days of operation will remain flexible in order to best meet the needs at the various locations. Call ahead to verify hours when you want to come in.

You will need to bring with you the following at a minimum:

- ID Card
- W-2, and any 1099 or 1098 forms or any other supporting documents.

- SSN or individual taxpayer identification number for spouse and children

- Power of attorney from your spouse if filing jointly
- Bank card or blank check with routing number and account number

If your spouse is going to file for you in the rear, you can get a power of attorney from the TAC.

As a reminder, you do qualify for a minimum of a 180-day extension to file due to your deployment in support of Operation Joint Guardian.

Call the Legal Assistance office at 781-4012 with any questions about the tax program. The OIC is Capt. Geoff DeWeese and the NCOIC is Sgt. Luis Luna. The Task Force Falcon TAC looks forward to helping you this filing season.

## FALCON'S FORCE

Do you think the Army is making a significant difference here?



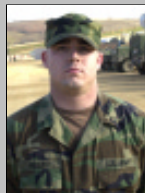
"As a medic, I'm actually doing my job and making a difference out there by helping treat the sick."  
*Spec. Stephanie Gresham, medic, Co. B, 47th FSB.*



"We're making sure everyone is safe to rebuild their lives, the little kids see us and know they're safe."  
*Spec. Robert Hansen, tank turret mechanic, HHC, 1st Bn., 35th Amr. Rgmt.*



"When I leave on convoys, I see happy kids waving at us and I know we're making a difference."  
*Sgt. Richard Suel, power generator equipment repair, Co. B, 47th FSB.*



"In some cases, yes. We're keeping the peace between the different cultures."  
*Pfc. Robert Weller, combat engineer, Co. B, 40th Eng. Bn.*



"Yes, all the work and support for the civilians and jobs so they can support their families."  
*Sgt. Miguel Mediano, communications NCO, Co. A, 141 Sig. Bde.*



"Yes, by helping people fix their towns and making them safe."  
*Spec. Melissa Moore, carpentry and masonry specialist, 368th Eng. Bn.*



*...Illumination continued from Page 1*

said Staff Sgt. Charles Burden, Paladin chief.

The AFCS helps the chief communicate, track the Paladin's position on the earth and identify friendly positions as well as potential targets.

"Everyone knows their role and that we have to work together to get the job done," said Spc. Kevin Cassidy, Paladin driver.

While the unit had an earlier live fire scratched, this mission went off without a hitch for the Paladin crews.

"This mission shows we have a job here and we're ready to do it," said Sgt. Carlos Colon, Paladin gunner.

"The high-intensity training environment at Baumholder has prepared our soldiers to complete any mission," said Capt. Thomas C. Hawn, battery commander, Btry. C, 4th Bn., 27th FA Rgt.

"Soldiers are motivated when they have a purpose," he said. "We're here to do our part to encourage peace in the region," he added.



Photo by Sgt. Thorin Sprandel  
Pfc. Chris Aguilar, cannon crew member, 1st Plt., Btry. C, 4th Bn., 27th FA Rgt., secures illumination rounds inside an M-109A6 Paladin.

*...Outpost continued from Page 1*

"We help out with humanitarian assistance, too," Terry added. Some of that assistance comes in the simple form of drinking water.

"Before KFOR, we didn't have any water or jobs here," said Albanian resident Imer Vllasaliu as he filled four two-gallon jugs from the KFOR water buffalo parked to the side of the Eagle's Nest. "Now, I have a job and can get fresh water from the soldiers."

Although it's isolated, some of the soldiers would rather be here than anywhere else.

"Yes, life for the soldiers up here is a bit more difficult. But most of the soldiers I have talked to up here said they really like being up here to run their mission, interact with the locals, and make a difference (in their lives)," said Cpl. James Martinez, communications specialist, Headquarters Company, 1st Bn., 35th Amr Rgt.

Martinez, who makes the 45-minute trip to Eagle's Nest at least twice weekly, checking the communications set-up, says he has seen a noted change in local attitude toward KFOR.

Facilities at Eagle's Nest are a little less glamorous than those at the base camps. Their movie theater doubles as the dining facility, reading room, conference room, and pass-through to the living quarters. And the water heater for the single shower that services more than 20 soldiers who live and work at the patrol base only heats 25 gallons at a time.

"We can only get four or five soldiers through the shower before the hot water runs out," said Sgt. Kevin Carter, armor crewman. "And then we are limited to 10 minutes maximum in the shower. Otherwise, all of the hot water would be used up and we would have to wait for hours until the heater filled up again."

And, according to Carter, there isn't a set rotation schedule for shower time.

"It's that 'Early bird that gets the worm,'" he said.

The soldiers make due, however.

"The soldiers are motivated and are making the best of living up here," Martinez said.

Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Rhett, platoon sergeant, said that he tries to keep soldiers motivated with physical training and weight lifting in their gym.

"We have a set PT schedule, and soldiers will come down to the gym to do additional PT on their own -- sometimes at all hours of the night," he said.

Even with all the missions, the collection of videotapes and DVDs that are brought in, and the weight lifting, Rhett added there is still an element of monotony, Rhett added.

The unit does what it can to help break that up any chance it gets by allowing soldiers time to rotate back to Camp Monteith for a few hours weekly. And this past Christmas, a full-size pool table was installed.

"We have everything here that we need," he said. "The only thing that I miss sometimes is the chance to go to a real movie theater or enjoy a large variety of meals."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Cassandra Shafter  
Local animals frequently roam the grounds of Eagle's Nest. This mixed-breed dog named "Old Blue" stops to enjoy a soldier's affection.



Sgt. Victor Sambrano, infantryman, Co. C, 2nd Bn., 327th Inf. Rgmt., looks for anything buried or hidden near one of the houses searched at dawn Jan. 5.

## Task Force 2-6 seize weapons, capture suspected UCPMB

*Story and photo by  
Sgt. Thorin Sprandel  
Camp Monteith PAO*

Kosovo Forces soldiers detained nine suspected members of the Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac (UCPMB) Jan. 6, and seized illegal weapons as part of an increased effort to stop the flow of arms and equipment through the Ground Safety Zone.

British soldiers from the 1<sup>st</sup> Princess of Wales Royal Regiment, under the operational control of Task Force 2-6, observed and confronted 10 armed ethnic Albanian men near Ukemet Mahala in southeastern Kosovo. The suspects, who wore camouflage uniforms, dropped 22 SKS rifles and fled toward the GSZ. After about an hour, the British unit apprehended nine of the ten suspects.

The men were taken to the Camp Bondsteel detention facility where they are held pending a KFOR investigation.

The day before, TF 2-6 seized weapons and ammunition during an early morning cordon and search in the village of Goraxhi. Company C, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 327<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, supported by 793<sup>rd</sup> Military Police Battalion and soldiers

from 1<sup>st</sup> PWRR, found four SKS rifles, a M-98 Mauser rifle, and more than 750 rounds of ammunition in an abandoned house. The bolt-action Mauser was painted red with the black eagle from the Albanian flag on the buttstock.

Five suspects from nearby houses were questioned about the illegal weapons and later released. The seizure was the largest for Company C. since Nov. 11 when they found 11 rifles, two grenades and bags of uniforms in Cernica.

On Dec. 20, a joint U.S. and British TF 2-6 patrol detained 13 suspected UCPMB members and seized a large weapons cache of small arms, rockets, grenades, mines and ammunition in the same part of southeastern Kosovo as the recent seizures.

In addition to searches and presence patrols near the GSZ, TF 2-6 has conducted boundary closure missions to help restrict UCPMB movements across the five kilometer-wide buffer zone between provincial Kosovo and Serbia.

According to the Military Technical Agreement of June 1999, KFOR has the right "to observe, monitor and inspect any and all facilities or activities in Kosovo that [KFOR] believes has or may have military or police capability."

## Army gets new logo, slogan for new millenium

*Story by Joe Burlas  
Army News Service*

To "Be all you can be" in the Army now means being "An Army of one."

Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera announced the new Army slogan that underscores the importance of individuals in a unified effort and unveiled a new Army logo — a white star superimposed over a yellow star — during a Department of Defense press briefing at the Pentagon Jan. 10.

"I am tremendously inspired by this new campaign and feel as if we are conveying a more accurate view of the men and women who comprise our Army," Caldera said. "It speaks to the individual strengths of each soldier and their part within the overall Army force."

The new slogan and logo will be featured in future Army advertising and recruiting efforts.

Leo Burnett USA, selected last June as the Army's lead advertising partner, has already developed a campaign featuring real soldiers rather than actors in a series of television, radio, print and web commercials. The first television ad, titled "Dog Tags," initially airs during NBC's "Friends" sitcom

Jan. 11. It will also air later on "The Simpsons," "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," and MTV.

"Leo Burnett took the time to learn about the Army and the people who are making significant contributions each and every day," Caldera said. "They understood that over time the Army had strayed from the true story of the American soldier — one of strength, intelligence and opportunity. And, they have showed a strong commitment to presenting a clear, unified picture of the Army."

"I am the Army" is the literal translation of the new message going out to the Hispanic target audience of 17- to 24-year-olds. The message is bilingual with Army being in English and the rest in Spanish. The reason for Army being English is to differentiate it from armies in Latin American countries, according to Victoria Hudson, executive vice president of Leo Burnett's Hispanic advertising partner Cartel Creativo.

The reason for a different message is because it says close to the same as "An Army of one" but accounts for Hispanic cultural differences such as the need to fit in and be embraced, said Hudson.

One of the key reasons why the Army needed to change its message was the fact that the Army has missed its recruiting goals

three out of the past five years — Be all you can be just wasn't working, Caldera said. Another reason is that advertising messages get old and tired with time no matter how recognizable they are, he continued.

The first slogan for the all-volunteer Army was "Today's Army wants to join you." This was followed in 1973 by "Join the people who've joined the Army" which evolved into a short-lived "This is the Army." "Be all you can be" first appeared in 1981.

Along with senior Army leaders and key Leo Burnett staff, five of the soldiers featured in the \$150-million ad campaign attended the press briefing. They were Cpl. Richard Lovett, assigned to 27th Engineer Battalion, Fort Bragg, N.C. and shown as the lone runner in the Dog Tags commercial; Sgt. Joseph Patterson, Soldier Systems Center, Natick, Mass.; Spc. Natalie Ortiz, 32nd Medical Logistics Battalion, Fort Bragg; Spc. Carlos Perez, a reservist assigned to the 6252nd Army Hospital, Ventura, Calif.; and Sgt. Leroy Durrah, 1st Signal Battalion, Fort Campbell, Ky.

Streaming video vignettes telling about the past, present and future plans of each of the advertising campaign soldiers can be viewed at <<http://www.goarmy.com>>. New Army radio, television and print commercials will direct viewers to the web site.





Using visual aids that children can relate to, Sgt. Brent Eichelberg, armor crewman, Co. B, 1st Bn., 35th Amr. Rgt. rehearses a mine awareness class to soldiers posing as the school children, during recent multinational mine awareness training. Sgt. John S. Puddy, tank gunner, Co. C, 1st Bn., 35th Amr. Bn., serves as the interpreter for the training.



Sgt. Kenneth J. Stewart, tank gunner, Co. A 1st Bn., 35th Amr. Rgt., uses a mouse trap as a prop to demonstrate for the "children" where they can be located, how they can be set off.



Stewart steps on a mouse trap during one of the practice classes to demonstrate how easy it is to set off a mine.

## Soldiers learn techniques to teach mine awareness

*Story and photos by  
Staff Sgt. Christopher Swartz  
Camp Bondsteel PAO*

"I walked into the first sergeant's office to talk to him about something and he was on the phone talking to someone. In the middle of the conversation he said, 'I have just the man for the job,' and the next thing I know I'm at Camp Bondsteel learning how to teach mine awareness to children," said Sgt. Brent J. Eichelberg, armor crewman, Company B, 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment.

The Swedish Mine Awareness Training Team, Swedish, British and Polish forces from Multinational Brigade (Central) and United States forces from Multinational Brigade (East) met to learn how to teach mine awareness to kids using a program developed by the UN and UNMIK.

The purpose of the mine awareness training we received is to teach us how to teach school children about mine awareness; how to be aware of mines, what they look like, what can happen if they come across a mine and what to do if they do see one, Eichelberg explained. The Swedish mine awareness team is teaching the class because they are the only one qualified to teach children now.

Kosovo Forces uses soldiers to conduct this training is because children tend to look up to them and listen to what they have to say, said Capt. Roger Patterson, instructor, Swedish Mine Awareness Training Team.

The first day participants learned mine awareness classes that would be given to

adults to familiarize themselves with the material. Then they learned how to take that information and turn it into a class that children can understand and pay attention.

"The difference between teaching children and adults is that children can't sit down and listen to someone lecture for 40 minutes, so we try to teach other soldiers how to use games and visual aids when teaching kids," Patterson said.

The soldier teaching the school children can't use real mines or grenades as a prop, because the children see that and wonder why it is safe for the soldier to touch it but not them, added Sgt. Robert Moy, mine advisor, 2nd Bn., 6th Engineer Regiment, United Kingdom.

On the second day, soldiers in the class had the opportunity to use all of the training they received and turn it into a class while other members of the class pretended to be children in one of the local Kosovar villages.

"Putting the students up in front of the other students to teach, gives them an opportunity to feel what it will be like up in front of a classroom of kids," said Lance Cpl. Alan Lee, British mine awareness training team. "Everyone evaluates each other, so we learn what we could possibly do better when the time comes that we actually have to teach the class to children."

On day three, soldiers wrapped up the classes and doing a quick review.

"I think this is a better way of informing the people of Kosovo about the danger of mines and it's a great way to keep up our international relations and stay in good standing with the people here," Eichelberg said.



## Dogs get new home

*Story by Pfc. Duane Brown  
Camp Bondsteel PAO*

Military Police at Camp Bondsteel celebrated the grand opening of a new dog kennel for the K-9 police Jan. 6.

The facility will provide a more stable living environment for the dogs to live.

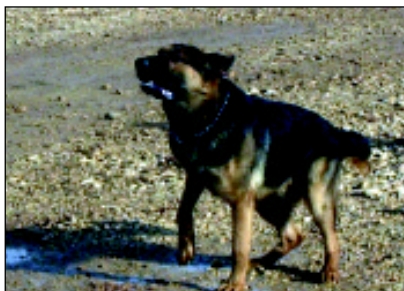
"The new kennel give the dogs a more stable, easy to clean and sanitary living environment," said Staff Sgt. Andrew L. Baxter, kennel master, 793<sup>rd</sup> Military Police Battalion. "The dogs up to this point were living in tents."

Living in tents, the dogs had little down time, Baxter said. Maintaining a constant temperature is very hard. So the dogs had to constantly move around to stay warm.

Brown and Root began construction in August 2000, said Baxter. The facility houses five military working dogs. The kennel has the capacity for eight dogs.

"To make this an ideal environment for the dogs, Brown and Root allowed me to provide input concerning design and types of material used for the inside construction," Baxter said.

"With the new kennel, the issue of inclement weather is no longer a problem," said Sgt. Sherell M. Henderson, narcotics detector dog handler, 793<sup>rd</sup> MP Bn. "This allows for optimal training conditions for both the dog and the dog handler."

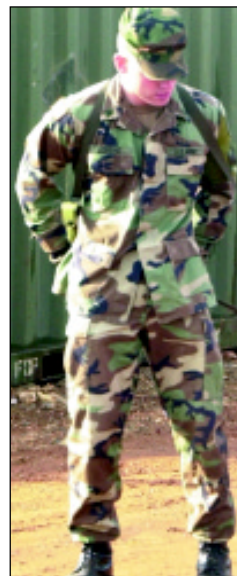


**Top:** Irk clamps down on the bite mitt worn by Staff Sgt. Barry Lenderman, explosives dog handler, 793<sup>rd</sup> MP Bn., and pulls against him as Irk tries to get him to lose his grip during training of the six phases of aggression. Military police dogs are required to receive four hours of training and 30 hours of mission work every week.

**Far right:** Irk races toward Lenderman ready to get a piece of the bite mitt. Moments before he tears into the mitt he is called off by his handler Sgt. Cory Lornez, explosives dog handler, 793<sup>rd</sup> MP Bn.

**Right:** Irk runs around to reposition himself at the side of his handler, Sgt. Cory Lornez.

**Above:** Irk gives his aggressor a few warning barks and a fake lunge before bolting off to attack him.





# 'Who let the dogs out?'

*U.S. K-9 team puts the bite into military police work*

**Story and photos by  
Staff Sgt. Christopher Swartz  
Camp Bondsteel PAO**

He's one of five military police dogs assigned at Camp Bondsteel. He's about 80 pounds of pure aggression, and when he bites down, it feels like a vice grip of razors is cutting into you -- that's with a bite mitt on.

These dogs are assigned here to help protect the soldiers on Camp Bondsteel and aid the task force mission.

"The primary mission of the dogs here in Kosovo is to provide explosives detection support, narcotics detection support and patrol support," said Staff Sgt. Andrew L. Baxter, kennel master, 793<sup>rd</sup> Military Police Battalion.

"They provide the task force with force protection measures by conducting preliminary gate searches as well as searching the area for narcotics coming in, random check points, going out on searches and responding to riot control," he said.

Dogs are used in different missions and are combat multipliers, Baxter said. The dogs are also a psychological deterrent.

"They provide both physical and psychological deterrents. Physical by actually being out, being proactive and the actual use of the dog," Baxter said. "

The psychological deterrent, because

people know what the dogs are capable of doing and detecting, it creates an element of fear and prevents them from doing things they might otherwise do if the dog wasn't there," he added.

These dogs are well trained and know how to react to just about any situation encountered, by reacting to actions or commands given by the handler, he stressed.

A good relationship and bond with the dog is what allows the handler to exercise so much control over him, Baxter said.

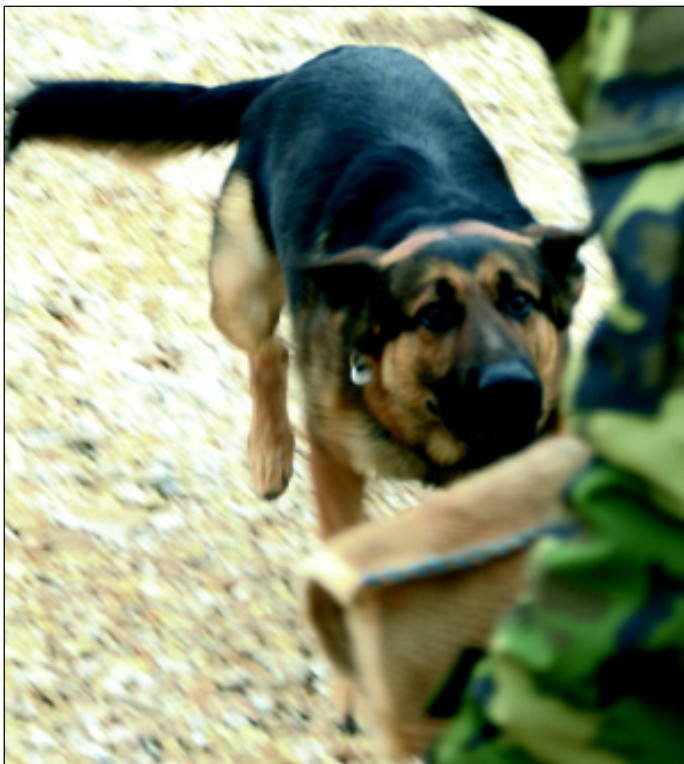
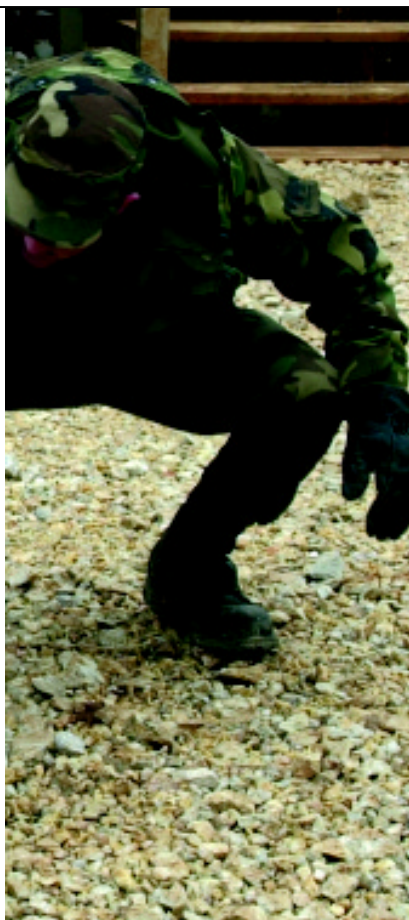
"Some dogs take longer than others," he said. "It can take some dogs up to 30 days to build that bond."

These working dogs have become a vital part of the military mission here in Kosovo and are almost like one of the soldiers.

The explosives detection dogs are important part of the mission here in Kosovo, but the narcotics dogs are used more to help support the patrols, Baxter added.

"They are a military police partner, they have four legs, they eat, they have social needs and we tend to them constantly. From the time the handler wakes up in the morning till the time he puts the dog to sleep, he's spending time with that animal," Baxter said.

"Sometimes they have a better relationship with the dog than their spouse, especially on deployments like this, because they spend so much time together," he added.



# TF 2-6 soldiers celebrate new millenium by keeping the peace in Gjilan/Gnjilane

*Story and photos by  
Staff Sgt. Cassandra Shafer  
Camp Monteith PAO*

It was business as usual for Task Force Falcon, on overnight patrol here -- helping maintain a safe and secure environment, and enforcing the curfew. But this wasn't just another night. It was New Year's Eve 2000.

As the streets and public gathering places began to fill--almost to capacity--with locals waiting to ring in the new Millennium, soldiers also began to filter in, making sure celebrants knew they were there and were ready to take any necessary action.

"It's a little more packed tonight than on other nights," said Sgt. David Ramirez, squad leader with 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, Company C, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, at the beginning of the night. "We have a little bit more activity than normal."

Aside from the usual drunken scuffles that start during many large celebratory gatherings, crowds were mostly peaceful.

Kosovars as young as four, threw firecrackers, held lit sparklers, and generally joined in the celebration.

"Like anyone else, they just want to have fun," said Pvt. Chad Price, a mechanized infantryman with 1<sup>st</sup> Plt.

As quickly as the crowds gathered, they dispersed.

Shortly after midnight Jan. 1, crowds began making their way to their homes, and by 45 minutes into 2001, Gjilan/Gnjilane was virtually empty. Trash and spent fireworks littered the streets, making downtown look like New York City after a ticker-tape pa-

rade.

Although Kosovo Forces soldiers, United Nations Mission in Kosovo Police, and Kosovo Police Services were prepared to respond to anything, the biggest problem of the night was curfew violators.

All totaled, 24 people were arrested and detained in Gjilan/Gnjilane between 1-5 a.m. according to Task Force 2-6 intelligence reports. Ramirez' crew picked up 13 of those. On non-holiday nights, crews round up an average of eight violators.

Despite the arrests of 15 people and

seizure of 24 weapons for illegal discharge across the province according to UNMIK-P, there were no reported incidents of "happy fire" in the Gjilan/Gnjilane area that night.

"It was actually a really quiet night in our sector," said Staff Sgt. Dale Pichelmeyer, battle noncommissioned officer for TF 2-6 tactical operations center.

And of spending the holiday working, Ramirez said "I really don't mind being out here for New Year's. I am doing what I like to do."



Pvt. Chad Price, infantryman, 1st Plt., Co. C, 2nd Bn., 6th Inf. Rgmt., watches over the crowd gathered in front of the Gjilan/Gnjilane City Theater for New Years Eve celebrations.



Pvt. Chad Price, infantryman, 1st Plt., Co. C, 2nd Bn., 6th Inf. Rgmt., maintains a peaceful environment after some intoxicated celebrants got too rowdy while Sgt. David Ramirez (background), squad leader, watches.

## Legal Corner

# Dealing with debt collectors

**Story by**  
**Capt. Geoffrey Deweese**  
**Task Force Legal Officer**

Most service members have some level of debt. This could be from a Visa card, a DPP card, a car loan or a home mortgage. If you fall behind in your payments or an error is made in your account, you may be contacted by a debt collector. Whether the collection is legitimate or not, you have certain protections under the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (the Act). While the act will not erase your legal debts, you should be aware of the rights you have under this law.

Under the act, a debt collector is any person who regularly collects debts owed to others. This could include attorneys who regularly collect debts. It does not include those who are collecting for debts owed to them. So if Bruno's Collections calls saying you owe the bank money, Bruno and his employees qualify as debt collectors. However, if Mr. Brown from the bank calls regarding the debt, he is not considered a debt collector under the Act.

When debt collectors first contact you, they must identify themselves and state that they are collecting on a debt. They must inform you that any information you provide them will be used to collect the debt. Further communications only have to disclose that the communication is from a debt collector. Within five days of contacting you orally,

the debt collector is required to send you written notice informing you how much money you owe, the name of the creditor you owe money to, and what actions you can take if you don't believe you owe the money.

After receiving this written notice, you have 30 days to write the debt collector back stating that you are disputing the validity of the debt. The collection agency must then provide you with verification of the debt. They must stop any collection attempts and cannot take any legal action against you until they provide such verification.

If you have an attorney, whether it is one you have hired yourself or your JAG legal assistance attorney, the debt collector must contact your attorney when they are told you are represented; they may no longer contact you directly. While collectors may contact other people to find out where you live or what your phone number is, they must identify who they are, but should refrain from referring to the debt and should contact third parties only once.

Debt collectors may not harass, oppress or abuse you or any of the parties they contact regarding the debt, and they may not use any false, deceptive or misleading representations while trying to collect the debt. Specifically, the debt collector may not call you at inconvenient times or locations (0800 to 2100 at your home is presumed to be convenient). They may not be obscene on the phone or repeatedly phone someone to annoy

them. It is illegal for debt collectors to post your name to any public list except to a credit-reporting agency. They may threaten to garnish your pay, seize your property or sue you *only* if the law allows them to take such actions *and* they actually intend to do so.

A debt collector may not threaten you with arrest or UCMJ action. You have every right to legitimately dispute a debt. AR 600-15, Indebtedness of Military Personnel, provides detailed requirements a creditor must meet to get help in processing any debts incurred by soldiers. If a creditor meets the requirements of AR 600-15, then the commander of the soldier may counsel that soldier about his or her obligations. However, the Army is not a debt-processing agency and will not take direct action to force a soldier to pay a debt. Nevertheless, a soldier who ignores his or her legitimate obligations despite being counseled by his command may face adverse administrative action or possible UCMJ action. But remember, it is up to your command, not the debt collector, to determine what military actions to take.

If you feel that a debt collector has violated the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, you may be able to sue the collector in state or federal court. However, you only have one year from the date the Act was violated within which to take any legal action. If you win, you could recover money for any



damages you suffered plus up to \$1,000 extra. You could also recover court costs and attorney's fees.

If a debt collector contacts you, you may contact your legal assistance attorney for help. Your JAG attorney can write the debt collector for you to demand verification of the debt and help negotiate possible payment options. If you decide to sue the debt collector for a violation of the Act, you will need to get a civilian attorney to go into court for you. Finally, it is important to remember that the Act only protects you from unfair practices by a debt collector; you will still have to meet your legitimate obligations.

Contact the Camp Bondsteel Legal Office for further assistance at 781-4012.

## Become a winner, work past your issues

**Story by Sgt. 1st Class Bruce Challender**  
**Equal Opportunity Advisor**

You are a winner! The military may have taught you a lot of things, but it could not have built you into the successful service member that you are today unless you already had the "Right Stuff" in you from the start. You have to have it on the inside before it will show on the outside. Some would say that your foundation of values, attitudes, and beliefs you brought with you was all that the military needed to build you into the successful service member that you are today.

But what happens when what you have inside of you is challenged? What do you do when someone tells you that your values, attitudes, and beliefs, the ones that helped make you that winner, are not the only way? Perhaps it is implied that because your values and beliefs built you into that winner, they are obviously the only valid values and beliefs that should be considered when making a decision or evaluating appropriate behavior. That, however, is just not true.

What then would your response be to someone that challenges your values, attitudes, and beliefs with his or her viewpoint that is just as valid as yours? What criteria are we going to use to measure their perspective of what values and beliefs are important to them? But, even more importantly, should we? Can we use those same values, attitudes, and beliefs that are being challenged in us to measure the values of others with? You are the winner, right? If your

perspective is not the only viewpoint that is considered as being valid, does that somehow place you in a position of no longer being that winner? Have your values and beliefs suddenly lost some of their own value?

Perhaps by sharing our own beliefs and values, and sharing in the perspective of another viewpoint we may become aware that it is our own values, attitudes, and beliefs that we need to truthfully examine. The challenge has indeed become an internal one, and whether we have the personal courage to examine some of our own values, attitudes, and beliefs and admit that some of them may have been rightly challenged. Can we say, without compromise that everything that has influenced our socialization, or gave each of us our own unique perspective, is the only template that should be used to look at the world? No, we cannot.

There may be some learned values or beliefs that we unknowingly hold, and act upon, that negatively influence how we interact with individuals that are of a different race, color, gender, religion, or national origin. We cannot use our own values, attitudes, and beliefs to rationalize or excuse our behavior, or anyone else's behavior, if we are treating someone in a prejudicial or discriminatory manner. The core values of the Army are predicated upon dignity and respect and we must meet the challenge of incorporating those basic principles into our common core of values, attitudes, and beliefs.

The military is one of the most diverse organizations in the world and its members are required to interact and manage unique challenges that continually require us to confront the issues of discrimination and prejudice whether it is within our units, our within ourselves. In so doing, we all are winners.



# Night shift keeps Bondsteel rolling

*Story and photo by Sgt. James Montoya  
Camp Bondsteel PAO*

Sleeping during the day and working at night is not the only out of the ordinary thing done by soldiers at Camp Bondsteel.

There is work to be done for the soldiers and Brown and Root civilians who work nights at Camp Bondsteel.

"It's a whole collective team effort that makes Camp Bondsteel run," said Staff Sgt. James M. Notine, operations sergeant, Mayor's Cell, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade.

Many issues, like taking care of emergency work orders and finding billeting for soldiers, go through the Camp Bondsteel Mayor's Cell during the night.

"We do our best to take care of everything with the help of Brown and Root," Notine said.

The Camp Bondsteel Force Protection office is just a little walk from the Camp Bondsteel Mayor's cell.

"When I first get here I make sure all the communication equipment is good, make sure we have all the paperwork we need and get ready to roll all night long," said Pfc. Robert A. Jeffries, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment.

After midnight soldiers check the tower line and check the towers, said Sgt. Scott A. Berg, HHB 4th Bn., 27th FA Rgt.

"From what I've seen in the towers, the guards are very professional and they pay attention all the time in a job that can get very monotonous," Berg said.

Whether soldiers are coming back from late night patrols or leaving early in convoys, for the HMMWV on Camp Bondsteel the wash rack and fuel point remain busy.

"Every night after patrol we clean the vehicles so in the morning we can see if anything is wrong," said Spc. Jeremy Shea, Military Policeman, 527th Military Police Company.

Colder night temperatures and water spraying everywhere in the wash rack makes this an unfavorable place to be when the sun goes down, but Brown and Root employees keep the wash rack running.

"We just clear off the ramps and make sure the pressure pumps are filled with gas. We do a good job with the people we have," said Perparim Haxhiu, Brown and Root civilian.

No matter what job has to be done at night, the personnel who work nights allow smooth and continuous operations of Camp Bondsteel.



**A Brown and Root worker tops off a HMMWV coming in from a mission at the Camp Bondsteel fuel point.**

## Vendor Bazar

50-65 Kosovar vendors, selling everything from woodcrafts to jewelry will be at the Camp Bondsteel Theater Jan. 20-21.

Hours will be from 9 a.m.-7 p.m. on Jan. 20 and from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Jan. 21.

US currency and checks only.

Call 781-5096 for more information.

## Movies December Movie Schedule Camp Bondsteel theater

Jan. 16	1930 2130	Book of Shadows Small Times Crooks	Jan. 24	1930 2130	Hollow Man Way of the Gun
Jan. 17	1600 2000	Lost Souls Bedazzled	Jan. 25	1930 2130	Woman on Top Lucky Number
Jan. 18	1930 2130	Replacements Dr. T & the Women	Jan. 26	1930 2130	Bait UrbanLegends
Jan. 19	2000 2130	Space Cowboys Ninth Gate	Jan. 27	1930 2130	Red Planet Bagger Vance
Jan. 20	1930 2130 1000-1900	Lucky Number The Contender <b>Bazaar (MWR South)</b>	Jan. 28	1930 2130	Watcher Original Kings of Comedy
Jan. 21	1930 2130 1000-1900	Remember the Titans Get Carter <b>Bazaar (MWR South)</b>	Jan. 29	1930	What Lies Beneath
Jan. 22	1930 2130	Way of the Gun Me, Myself and Irene	Jan. 30	2000	Hip Hop Band
Jan. 23	1930 2130hrs	The Contender The Cell	Jan. 31	1930 2130	Replacements What Lies Beneath

## Chaplains' Corner

# Attitude is everything

**Story by**  
**Capt. Dean A Darroux**  
**Chaplain**

There is a saying that I learned a long time ago that goes like this: "What are little boys made of? Frogs and snails and puppy dog's tails, that's what little boys are made of. What are little girls made of? Sugar and spice and all that's nice, that's what little girls are made of." Without much thought, one quickly recognizes that whatever the intention of the author was, little boys are certainly not seen as anything nice. The issue that this saying addresses boils down to perception, which in turn leads to attitude.

This perception of little boys is defined by what is revealed on the outside, what appears on the surface. The reality is, what is revealed on the outside does not necessarily determine character and personality. Perception can often lead to accusation and accusation can lead to judgment. With the right attitude we can see beyond the surface, beyond the mere external and get to the heart of things and discover that pearl of great price that diamond nestled in the bedrock. It is with such an attitude that we allow challenges and obstacles to become stepping-stones and opportunity.

Too often we can look at

ourselves and become despondent and shameful for who we are. We allow the perception of others to determine our attitude rather than allowing our attitude to determine our self-worth and the value we are to those around us. Attitude therefore, is everything and someone said that it is "your paintbrush because it colors every situation."

Our key to a successful rotation here in Kosovo is very much dependent on us having the right attitude. I read this quote sometime ago that sheds light on what I am seeking to present. These are the words of Dr. Viktor Frankl, an Austrian psychiatrist who was a prisoner of war and this is what he says:

We who lived in concentration camps can remember the ones who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number but they offered sufficient proof that everything can be taken from us but one thing: the last of the human freedoms to choose one's own attitude in any given set of circumstances to choose one's own way.

With the right attitude certainly we can color our situations with memories that have far-reaching effects. How do we develop the right kind of attitude that will enable us to appreciate rather than deprecate? I think foremost in our thinking is the willingness to accept situations

we cannot change and make the best out of them.

Two prisoners sat in the same cell and as they looked through their window one became very happy and was smiling and appreciating life, the other was very sad and lonely. When asked why he was sad the prisoner replied, "There is nothing beyond this window but the same old courtyard with nothing new and exciting. The same question was posed to the happy prisoner who replied, when I see outside I see the birds as they fly, the trees and grass as they grow, the flowers as they blossom and I am reminded that there is life beyond these walls and this reality will keep me hoping."

Another plus in developing the right attitude is the value we place on ourselves. In our society today we measure our worth by two criteria, appearance and performance. If we are not as capable as the other person or the rank on our color is less than that of the other person or if we see ourselves as nameless numbers in life's vast index box then we are prime candidates for developing the wrong attitude. We develop the right attitude when we recognize that we are valuable and are worthwhile because we are persons of worth. It is not our rank or our name that makes us; it is what we choose to do with what we have.

Let us remember as we journey here for the next few



months that one of the keys that will open the door to a successful rotation is attitude. Attitude will allow us to remain focused and objective as we realize the path that we must follow. Someone sums it up by saying: "The road to success is not straight. There is a curve called failure-a loop called confusion-speed bumps called friends-red lights called enemies-caution lights called family-you will have flats called jobs-but if you have a spare called determination-an engine called perseverance-and a spirit called attitude then you will make it to a place called success."

Keep the right attitude and change the outlook of your life.

## Task Force Falcon Worship Schedule

<u>Camp Bondsteel</u>	<u>Latter Day Saint</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>
<u>Roman Catholic</u>	Sun 1600 Service - South Chapel	1900 Praise and Worship Night
Sun 0730 South Chapel	Sun 1700 Sunday School	
Sun 1200 Mass - Peacekeepers Chapel	Mon 1800 Family Home Evening	<u>SATURDAY</u>
Sun 1900 Mass - Peacekeepers Chapel		1800 Gospel Choir Practice
Mon 1130 Mass - Peacekeepers Chapel	<u>Jewish</u>	2000 Movie Night
Tue 1930 Mass - Peacekeepers Chapel	Fri 2000 Service - South Chapel	
Tue 2000 RCIA - Peacekeepers Chapel	<u>Other</u>	<u>Camp Able Sentry</u>
Wed 1130 Mass - South Chapel	Sat 1100 Adventist Service - South Chapel	<u>Sunday</u>
Wed 1900 Bible Study - South Chapel	Sun 1900 Praise and Worship - South Chapel	0130 Protestant Service
Wed 1930 Bible Study - Peacekeepers Chapel		1300 Spanish Mass
Thu 1930 Mass/School of Prayer - South Chapel	<u>Camp Montieth Services</u>	1600 LDS Service
Fri 1130 Mass - Peacekeepers Chapel	<u>SUNDAY</u>	1900 Gospel Service
Sat 1700 Mass - South Chapel	0830 LDS Service	<u>Tuesday</u>
<u>Protestant</u>	1000 Protestant Service	1900 Gospel Bible Study
Sun 0900 Service - South Chapel	1115 Bible Study	<u>Wednesday</u>
Sun 0930 Service - Peacekeepers Chapel	1300 Gospel Service	2000 Mid-Week Bible Study
<u>Gospel</u>	1600 AA Meeting	<u>Thursday</u>
Sun 1200 Service - South Chapel	1900 Catholic Mass	1900 Prayer Meeting
Sun 1600 Service - Peacekeepers Chapel	2000 Contemporary Service	<u>Friday</u>
Thu 1800 Prayer - Peacekeepers Chapel	<u>TUESDAY</u>	1900 Gospel Hour
Fri 1900 Joy Night - Peacekeepers Chapel	1900 New Believers Class	<u>Saturday</u>
Sat 2000 Gospel Choir Practice - Peacekeepers Chapel	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	1730 Catholic Mass
<u>Islam</u>	1900 Catholic Mass/Inquiry Class	1900 Choir Rehearsal
Fri 1200 Prayer - South Chapel	<u>THURSDAY</u>	
	0800 Catholic Mass	
	1900 Promise Keepers Bible Study	

# MEDCOM keeps KFOR soldiers in good health

**Story and photos by  
Pfc. Duane Brown  
Camp Bondsteel PAO**

Keeping soldiers healthy, both mentally and physically, is an important part of the mission in Kosovo, so important the Army has teams dedicated to control such matters.

Preventive medicine, combat stress, physical security, Brown and Root vector control and Red Cross are the elements that make up the Base Camp Assessment team. Of the five elements, preventive medicine is the most important element of this mission concerning the well being of soldiers in the field, according to medical officials.

"Our mission is to provide all levels of preventive medicine support to all units assigned to Task Force Falcon," said Sgt. 1st Class Tim J. Colquitt, preventative medicine team noncommissioned officer in charge, Task Force MedFalcon. "In the living areas, we look to make sure that each soldier has a minimum of 55 square feet of space to live, sleep and work in," said Colquitt.

Medical teams educate soldiers on the importance of having cots arranged so they alternate head to toe, Colquitt said. This helps cut down on the number of upper respiratory infections among soldiers, especially colds, influenza.

"While inspecting living

conditions, we look for evidence of cockroaches and other infestations that are medically detrimental," Colquitt said.

With soldiers in the field 14-20 days at a time, sanitation becomes a major issue, Colquitt explained.

"To prevent the spread of disease, we make sure the soldiers clean-up after themselves," he said. "We also look to see if anything is stored on the floor, making it easy for insects or rodents to get at."

Food service inspections are also the responsibility of the task force. This not only includes field facilities, but all dining facilities, Morale Welfare and Recreation areas and Burger Kings as well, Colquitt said.

"It's our job to make sure food is received, prepared and served in a sanitary manner," Colquitt said.

When serving food in the field, there are standards that must be met, said Spc. Alana D. Cantrell, water lab specialist, TFMedFalcon.

"Food served in mermitees must be consumed within four hours of being packed," said Cantrell. "After this time, food reaches what is called the temperature danger zone. The temperature danger zone is anything below 140 degrees for heated food. At this temperature bacteria will begin to grow."

"Water analysis is also an important part of our operation," Cantrell said. "Here we look for bacteriological and chemical



**Sgt. 1st Class Tim J. Colquitt, NCOIC, preventative medicine, TF MedFalcon visually inspects food inside mermitees.**

irregularities."

Regular inspections are performed on Camps Bondsteel, Monteith, Able Sentry and 36 outposts, Colquitt said. Camps Bondsteel and Monteith are inspected two to three times a month. CAS is inspected weekly.

CAS has a PM representative on station at all times. Out

post camps are inspected on a monthly basis, Colquitt said. The PM team serves all other North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries and United Nations representatives in the Kosovo Force area as well.

"This is our way of supporting the troops involved with the KFOR mission," Colquitt added.



**Spc Alana D. Cantrell, water lab specialist, TF MedFalcon, and Spc. Jeffery C. Hamilton, combat engineer, HHC, 40th Eng. Bn., inspect soldiers living quarters, looking for any signs of cockroaches or things that may attract insects.**





Photo by Spec. Sean Stralhausser

Spec. Zilkia Rodriguez, supply clerk, 208th Finance Bn., explains to a school child how many gifts he can pick from the boxes the soldiers brought.

## 'Money bags' convoy delivers holiday cheer

**Story by Capt. Alayne Cramer  
Camp Bondsteel PAO**

The two-vehicle advanced party left Camp Bondsteel at 8 a.m. and crept through the crowded, windy streets of Ferizaj/Urosevac to reserve parking spaces for the remainder of the 208th Finance Battalion's "money bags" convoy. Soldiers from Detachment C were not dealing with money this Friday morning, but were delivering school supplies and clothes to Our Future, a daycare center in town.

Although the holiday season was coming to a close, the finance soldiers wanted to share some additional good cheer and tidings with 220 children, ages ranging from seven months up to seven years old. Some children attending the daycare center have families of their own but some children are orphans and have been adopted by Our Future, according to Capt. Charles A. Taylor, detachment commander.

The finance detachment brings soldiers from the two base camps in Kosovo and Camp Able Sentry and rotates them for the visits to the daycare center. It has five soldiers at Camp Monteith, 20 at Camp Bondsteel and 17 at CAS. The finance team comes from all over Europe, including Stuttgart, Vincenza, Heidelberg and Mannheim. The detachment also has 29 U.S. Army reserve soldiers from Puerto Rico serving with it in Kosovo.

The visit kicked off at 9 a.m. when the principal of the center greeted the soldiers at the door and seated them in the back of a large classroom. The room was decorated for the holidays with balloons hung from the ceiling along with stuffed animals and the children's holiday art projects tacked to the walls. The finance soldiers soon found out

they would not only be giving away gifts to the children but would also be recipients of a holiday show.

"Visiting the daycare center in Ferizaj gives the finance soldiers at Camp Bondsteel and Monteith and CAS a chance to do something good during their tour in Kosovo," said Taylor. "It also gives the soldiers at the base camps a chance to get away and provides for a nice release.

"The visit is great for the kids and they love the attention," Taylor added.

The 60 or so children present this day were broken down into many age groups consisting of three- and four-year-olds, and six- and seven-year-olds. The children lined up in front of three microphones and began the festivities with the Albanian national anthem and quickly transitioned into singing many songs and reciting many poems in honor of Bajram, an Albanian holiday at the end of the pilgrimage season. The last group sang a song that said goodbye to the old year and welcomed the coming of the New Year along with a new "Babadimri" or Albanian Santa Claus. This song allowed for the introduction of the real Santa Claus visit to Our Future.

Pfc. Johnny J. Reid, a 208th finance soldier stationed at CAS, dressed up as Santa Claus and happily performed his role wearing a red robe and watch cap along with a mustache and beard made from cotton balls. The children anxiously gathered around "Babadimri" and his enormous bag of gifts. Reid and his merry band of followers moved into another classroom for the "goody bag" distribution. The daycare center provided Santa Claus with little bags filled with snacks, crackers, candy and other assorted items to warm up the children for the finance detachment gifts.

When asked about how he felt to be Santa Claus for the children of Our Future,

Reid said, "It's great, I like to see the expression on their faces."

"I'm very happy that Santa Claus came to visit us today," said Hannah Lamaxhema, a five-year-old girl who attends the daycare center in Ferizaj.

After Santa Claus' visit, the children and their parents moved into another classroom and soldiers from the finance detachment distributed gifts they brought. The five large boxes of gifts consisted of school supplies, cookies and clothes.

Daycare donations were given through a program called, "Operation Finance Cares," according to Taylor. "We received donations from people working for the Defense Finance Accounting Service based in Indianapolis, Ind. All of the DFAS centers in the United States, including centers in Mannheim/Heidelberg, Germany contributed to the program.

"Today's visit was great, I got to see the people and kids at the daycare center, and the visit reminded me of my two kids, a seven-year-old and a five-year-old," said Spec. William Cora, a finance soldier from Camp Bondsteel. "I'm happy even though I can't see them this holiday."

Although the soldiers were sad to leave the children, they knew they would be back again. This is the fourth finance unit to adopt the daycare center. Since their arrival at the end of October 2000, Detachment C has visited Our Future four times.

"I'm very happy when the American soldiers visit us," said Argjenta Kryeziu, a ten-year-old who attends the daycare center and whose mother is a teacher in the school. "I'm happy when the soldiers are here because they give us games and gifts and spend lots of time with us."

# Wizards dance team visits Bondsteel



Photo by Pfc. Duane Brown

The Washington Wizards dance team entertain soldiers at Camp Bondsteel with a little song and dance. The team stayed at Camp Bondsteel for two nights, performing once at the Camp Bondsteel theater and once in Viti/Vitina for the soldiers there.



Photo by Pfc. Duane Brown

Jessica of the Washington Wizards dance team asks a fan what he would like her to write on the picture of the cheerleading team before signing her autograph. The team took time out for autograph and photo sessions before and after the show in the brigade TOC and the theater.



Photo by Pfc. Duane Brown

Rachel sits on the lap of a KFOR soldier during her singing routine of the performance by at the Washington Wizards dance team performance Jan. 2 at the Camp Bondsteel theater.